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CITY

POPULAR CRITICISM OF CIA

CPYRGHT

DAVID MCCONNELL: "This is David McConnell. As former Admiral Raborn assumes the duties of his new post, that of director of the CIA, he must know that his agency has become the object of a great deal of criticism both at home and abroad. Recent things in South America and in South Viet Nam have caused many authors and journalists to take issue with the CIA's policy and it's personnel. The latest example of criticism in connection with CIA affairs is a novel published by Morris West. Some say it resembles too closely the recent events which surrounded the end of the Diem regime. The man who says this, and is prepared to discuss the CIA and its defractors is correspondent Stewart Alsop:"

STEWART ALSOP: "Faction writers seem a bit fear minded these days. A year or so ago, the fashion in political fiction was to suggest the military, and the Air Force especially, was about ready to take over the U.S. government in order to blow up the world with nuclear weapons. Now the great villian is the Central Intelligence Agency. No less than four anti-CIA novels have just been published or are about to be published. In all of them, the poor old CIA plays a thoroughly discreditable role.

"One of them, called The Ambassador, is pretty certain to be a best seller, since its author, Morris West, is a good writer, with at least one first class novel to his credit. Most of these works have the usual disclaimer to the effect that they are works of fiction and pure imagination, and that is precisely what they are. Any resemblance to what the CIA is really like is totally coincidental. The Ambassador for example, is a very thinly veiled account of the downfall of the late president in South Viet Nam. A lot of readers are going to assume that the book is an accurate reflection of what actually happened in Viet Nam at the time. It is, in fact, in many respects, the precise opposite of what happened. To cite one example: the CIA station chief is represented as a slimy fellow who is principally responsible for Diem's assassination. Actually, the CIA station chief at the time John Richardson was recalled in part because he fought a losing battle against the policy of pulling Diem down with no one to replace him.